

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

VOLUME VII. No. 20

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FEBRUARY 11, 1917

The Flag.

BY HELEN M. RICHARDSON.

THE flag is waving in the breeze,—
The flag we love so well;
Upon the land, upon the seas,
Its colors ever spell
Freedom for all. Long may it wave
Its red, its white, its blue;
And may we to its stars and stripes
Be loyal, constant, true.

Lincoln's Speech.

ON a Sunday that Lincoln spent in New York City he visited a Sunday school in the notorious region called Five Points, and there made a short address to the scholars. After his return to Springfield, one of his neighbors, hearing of this, thought it would be a good subject to banter Lincoln about, and accordingly visited him for that purpose. The neighbor was generally known as "Jim," just as Lincoln was called "Abe." The following account of his visit, quoted by Mr. Francis F. Browne in his "Everyday Life of Abraham Lincoln," shows that he did not derive as much fun from the "bantering" as he had expected.

He started for "Old Abe's" office; but, bursting open the door impulsively, he found a stranger in conversation with Mr. Lincoln. He turned to retrace his steps when Lincoln called out:

"Jim, what do you want?"

"Nothing."

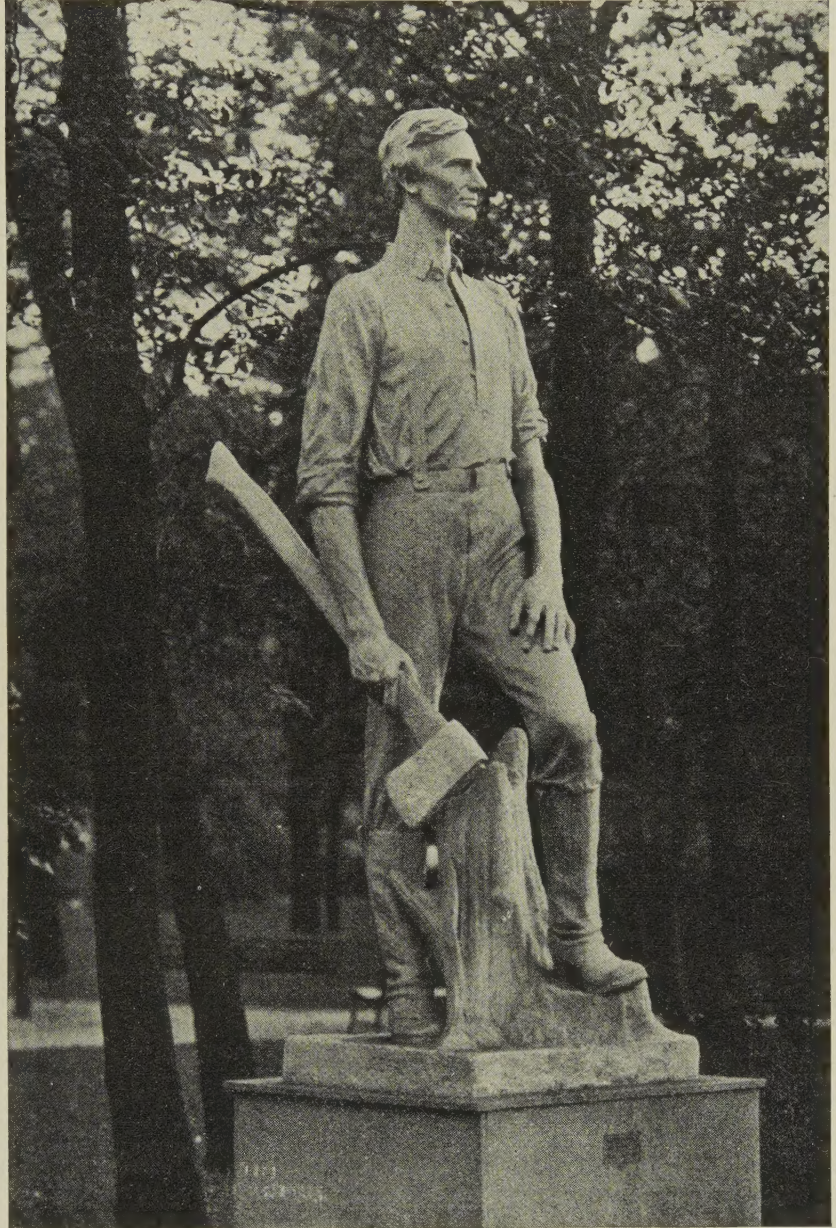
"Yes, you do; come back."

After some entreaty Jim approached Mr. Lincoln and remarked, with a twinkle in his eye, "Well, Abe, I see you have been making a speech to some Sunday-school children. How about it?"

"Sit down, Jim, and I'll tell you all about it." And with that Lincoln put his feet on the stove and began:

"When Sunday morning came I didn't know exactly what to do. Mr. Washburne asked me where I was going. I told him I had nowhere to go, and he proposed to take me down to the Five Points Sunday school to show me something worth seeing. I was very much interested in what I saw. Presently Mr. Pease came up and spoke to Mr. Washburne, who introduced me. Mr. Pease wanted us to speak. Washburne spoke, and then I was urged to speak. I told them I did not know anything about talking to Sunday schools, but Mr. Pease said many of the children were friendless and homeless and that a few words would do them good. Washburne said I must talk. And so I rose to speak; but I tell you, Jim, I didn't know what to say. I remembered that Mr. Pease said they were homeless and friendless, and I thought of the time when I had been pinched by terrible poverty.

"And so I told them that I had been poor; that I remembered when my toes stuck out through my broken shoes in winter; when my arms were out at the elbows; when I shivered with the cold. And I told them



Statue by Charles J. Mulligan

"THE RAIL-SPLITTER."

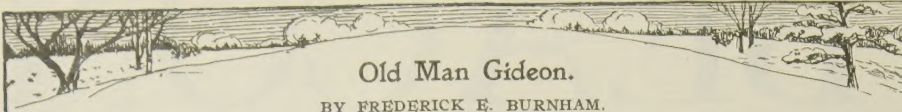
there was only one rule: that was, always do the very best you can. I told them that I had always tried to do the very best I could, and that if they would follow that rule they would get along somehow.

"That was about what I said. And when I got through, Mr. Pease said it was just the thing they needed. And when the school was dismissed all the teachers came up and shook hands with me and thanked me, although I did not know that I had been saying anything of any account; but the next morning I saw my remarks noticed in the papers."

Just here Mr. Lincoln put his hand in his pocket and remarked that he had never heard anything that touched him as had the songs that those children sang. With that

he drew forth a little book, saying that they had given him one of the books from which they sang. He began to read a hymn with all the earnestness of his great soul. In the middle of the second verse his friend Jim felt a choking in his throat and a tickling in his nose. At the beginning of the third verse he saw that the stranger was weeping, and his own tears fell fast. Turning toward Lincoln, who was reading straight on, he saw the great, blinding tears in his eyes, so that he could not possibly see the pages. He was repeating the little song from memory. How often he had read it, or how long its sweet and simple accents continued to reverberate through his soul, no one can know.

Youth's Companion.



Old Man Gideon.

BY FREDERICK E. BURNHAM.

"Gideon! Gideon! Old Man Gideon!
How many skunks to-day?
Gideon! Gideon! Old Man Gideon!
Your whiskers are scraggly and gray."

THOUGH more than forty years have passed, I can see the picture as plainly as though it were only yesterday—a man well past middle age, with a beard much resembling Rip Van Winkle's, slouching through town, a pack of furs on his back, and, I regret to state, a pack of boys at a respectful distance, shouting the above rhyme. Occasionally he would turn and shake his fist at them, much to the delight of his tormentors. In the winter he was the target of innumerable snowballs, and in summer, when he came to town with berries, they shot at him with bean-blowers, though his bushy beard well protected his face from the latter stinging missiles.

We boys all feared him, partly because we realized that our scandalous actions deserved dire punishment, and partly from the fact that most of our mothers had in our younger days exacted obedience with the terrible warning, "Gideon will get you, if you don't mind."

Gideon Black lived alone in a big pine forest four miles or more from the village. It was his lonely cabin which my brother John and I stumbled across late one afternoon in a terrible blizzard, a lucky chance which undoubtedly saved our lives.

We had received permission to go over to our Aunt Julia's to spend a couple of days, and had started early in the morning, taking a short cut through the woods, a distance of about seven miles. We had been that way before a number of times and had no fear of getting lost. All no doubt would have gone well with us, had we not stopped on the way to build a fire and bake half a dozen potatoes, which we had slipped into our pockets before leaving home.

A storm had been brewing for several days and shortly before noon it began to snow. The northeast wind, which had been sharp, quickly took on a deathly chill, cutting through our reefers like a knife. Hastily kicking out the fire, we started on our way. Before we had gone half a mile the snow was more than an inch deep, and in places had formed little drifts a foot deep. Worst of all, coming from the quarter which it did, we were obliged to face the storm.

The woods sheltered us a good deal, but it was not long before the snow became so deep that our progress was greatly impeded. There were drifts through which we were barely able to struggle.

"There's that big pine again!" exclaimed John, suddenly, coming to an abrupt stop and pointing to a fallen tree which we had gone by some time previous.

The discovery thoroughly frightened us, indicating as it did that we had been going in a circle, but, bringing into play the little knowledge of woodcraft which we possessed, we took our bearings and pressed on with the greatest vigor.

Nearly frozen, perhaps a quarter of an hour later, we found ourselves again staring at the same tree.

"Get some twigs, John, and we will start

a fire," I said. "There is no way out of it; we are lost and have got to make a night of it here."

Kicking the snow away from the upended roots of the big pine, we soon had a little pile of dry pine twigs and small branches, which we knew would burn almost like tinder. Getting down on my knees, I took the few precious matches which I had with me and prepared to light the fire. John took off his reefer, so as to shelter the match when I lighted it. The precaution was needless, however, for we quickly made the terrifying discovery that the matches had got wet in my pocket and would not light. In vain we fished through our pockets for other matches, but aside from the usual assortment of nails, buttons and fishhooks we found nothing.

John began to cry and I joined him in short order, but, struggling to our feet, I helped him on with his coat again, and we pushed blindly ahead, falling again and again, but ever pressing onward. John's face was half covered with blood from a bad scratch he had received in a fall. The blood and tears frozen together on his cheeks gave him a ghastly appearance when at last he faltered and turning to me said that he could go no further.

The end seemed very near when, the blanket of snow lifting for an instant, I saw dimly what looked like the side of a building. It was probably less than a hundred feet distant, but I was obliged to drag John the entire way.

"We are safe, John," I cried excitedly, getting under the lee of the house. But my ardor was considerably cooled when I discovered that it was Gideon's cabin. I had seen it the previous summer while taking a walk with my father and I recognized it instantly.

The door was locked, and I recalled the fact that on that very morning just before we started I had seen Gideon on his way to the county-seat with a bundle of furs. I knew that on such occasions he was usually gone a full day, and, much as I feared him, I determined to force an entrance. The windows were also locked, but with my mittened fist I broke a pane of glass and, reaching inside, turned the catch. Having pushed up the window, I lifted my brother up and dumped him in a heap on the floor, a moment later climbing in myself.

Within there was an abundance of firewood, and in a few moments I had a roaring fire in the fireplace, and, getting John up in front of it, he soon recovered, though he fairly howled with pain when the blood began to circulate freely once more.

"Where are we?" he asked at length.

"In Gideon's camp," I answered.

The yell of terror he gave when he heard this news far eclipsed his former cries of pain. He was only twelve years old, two years younger than myself, and it was not strange that he was frightened. As a matter of fact, I was trembling with fear, lest Gideon should return and find us there.

The same thought evidently came to both of us,—the preparing of an avenue of escape, in case Gideon should return,—for we walked to the window in the rear of the cabin and unlocked it. This done, we resumed our

seats by the fire. It was growing dark outside, but this fact rather pleased us than otherwise, for we felt that had Gideon intended to return that day he would have done so before nightfall. We were wicked enough to express the wish that if he had attempted to come, he would lose his way.

Tired as we were, the warmth of the room soon had its effect upon us, and it was not long before we both dropped asleep. We had slept but a short time, however, before we were awakened by a sound that simply paralyzed us with fear. The door of the cabin had been opened and was closed with a bang. Before us, half buried up in snow, stood Gideon!

"I have found you at last," he said, in a voice that seemed terrible to us. "I've followed your tracks for half an hour and was beginning to think that you had escaped me."

"Mister Gideon, will you please let us go?" I managed to gasp.

"No!" thundered the old man. "You will stay here."

Retreat by way of the window was now out of the question. In fact had the door been wide open, petrified as we were with terror, I doubt if either of us could have moved from our chairs.

"Where were you bound?" he demanded.

"We were just going over to Aunt Julia's," answered John, crying.

"That's good; folks won't miss you then."

That settled it with both of us. Gideon was going to kill us and perhaps eat us. Standing there with the light from the fire playing upon his bearded face, to our distorted imaginations he looked like a great ogre. Poor John actually fainted from fright, pitching senseless to the floor. Somehow the sight of my brother in a dead faint quickened my senses, and drawing my jack-knife, boy that I was, I prepared to sell my life dearly.

"Poor little boy! I didn't mean to scare him," said the old man, evidently not noticing my action.

Never shall I forget the tenderness with which he lifted John from the floor and placed him on the bed, with rare thoughtfulness hastily backing away, lest, coming to, my brother should see him bending over him.

"I just thought that if your folks were expecting you home to-night, I would push on down the mountain and tell them that you were safe."

I never expect to again hear words so sweet and reassuring as those of the old man. Big boy that I was, I felt like going over to him and just hugging him. In a moment the cabin had been transformed from a dungeon to a palace, and Gideon from a frightful fiend to an incarnation of all that was good.

When John came out of his faint he gave vent to the most blood-curdling yell I ever heard. It was sort of a double-header, beginning when he expelled the air from his lungs, a tremendous crescendo marking his inhalation. Gideon fairly jumped, dropping the candle which he had just lighted. Clapping my hand over John's mouth, yell number two, which was on the way, was smothered, and, telling him that everything was all right, he subsided, though he softly sobbed for a long time.

Meanwhile Gideon busied himself getting supper. He put a dozen or more potatoes in the embers and hung a kettle of water on the crane, pushing it back over the fire. From the cupboard he brought dishes and

set the table. From a locker he produced a huge ham, and cutting off two big slices, slapped them into a great frying-pan.

That supper was something never to be forgotten. We had eaten practically nothing since leaving home and were nearly famished. We were waited upon with a lavish hand. The tea was considerably stronger than our mother would have approved of, but we did not stop at one or two cups. When the ham and potatoes had disappeared, Gideon went to the cupboard again and returned with a big dish of cookies and a plate of cheese.

We discovered that our host was a good housekeeper, for after supper he busied himself washing the dishes. John dried them and I put them away. This work having been completed, Gideon threw more wood on the fire and drawing his armchair up before the blaze told us to do likewise. Without, the wind howled through the forest and we could hear the snow as it beat against the windows, and where I had broken the pane of glass we could see a little drift forming on the sill, in spite of the piece of burlap which Gideon had stuffed in the hole.

We found Gideon a great story-teller. His stories were of the kind that interest every healthy boy. He told us about his fight with a panther twenty years previous, showing us the long scars on his arms, which he had received at that time, and when he had finished, he triumphantly pointed to the pelt of the big brute which hung on the wall.

It was past midnight when he suggested that we should go to bed. As he got up he laid his rough hand on John's head, and I saw his frame shaken as with a mighty sob; two big tears rolled down his cheeks, disappearing in his shaggy beard.

"I had a boy like you once," he said, his voice breaking, "and a wife, but they have been dead more'n thirty year."

Even after we went to bed he told us stories until we dropped asleep while he was talking.

The following morning, the storm having ceased, Gideon led the way to the village. The landscape was so changed that we had not the slightest idea of direction, but with the cunning of the experienced woodsman, he kept the trail, two hours later bringing us out onto the road, within a gunshot of our home. We thanked him for his kindness and tried to get him to come home with us, but this he firmly refused to do.

Before now almost every boy in town knew how Gideon had cared for us, and it was tacitly understood that the first boy who annoyed him in the future would have a serious fight on his hands.

Many times that winter and spring we went up to visit the old man, and we always found him delighted to see us. Other boys joined us from time to time until Gideon's cabin became a sort of Mecca to which we journeyed for a day or half a day's pleasure. In a word, we found in Gideon a real friend, one worthy of the greatest respect.

Good St. Valentine wanders by,
Pausing, his festival gay to keep;
Already the feet of the winter fly,
And the pulse of the earth begins to leap.

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

Emerson said of Lincoln, "His heart was as large as the world, yet it had no room in it for the memory of a wrong."

Siu's Tenement Home in Borneo.

BY VLYN JOHNSON.

PART II.

SIU and his whole family smiled and bowed most politely to Geoffrey and his father, who met their curious glances very kindly, as they knew that two white people must seem strange-looking creatures to these brown people.

"Siu's father invites you to have a meal with him," said the interpreter. "It is the hour for theirs."

Geoffrey's father, who knew the customs of the people, requested that the women eat with them, and won a bright smile from Siu's mother as a reward. Rice, cooked in bamboo, and fish and some crocodile were offered to the guests. Every one sat on the floor and had his food served on fresh clean leaves. It was no easy task to eat with the fingers when one had been accustomed to knives and forks and spoons; but the visitors did their best, and he it said to Geoffrey's credit that he neither smiled nor spilled his food.

"You must not refuse any kind of food," the interpreter explained very gravely, "because some animal is sure to bite you upon your return."

When he explained to the Dyak chief what he had told the white guests, Siu's father nodded his head and so did all the others.

Right after dinner Siu proudly showed Geoffrey the heads that were still prized as trophies of former days. But he soon saw that his little white guest grew very much whiter and was clever enough to connect the paleness with the heads. Geoffrey was much relieved when Siu led him away from the fireplace over which hung the ghastly-looking objects. This fireplace was not the one in the room where the cooking was done, but another in that portion of the covered veranda, or open hall, corresponding to the breadth of the room occupied by Siu's family.

"Father, do you notice that the floor of the open piazza is different from that of the covered one and of the rooms? Why do you suppose it is not like the rest?"

"Can't you pretty nearly figure that out for yourself, my boy?" Geoffrey's father liked to make the boy do some of his own thinking.

"Because the bamboo flooring wouldn't stand all kinds of weather like these hard laths?" suggested the lad.

"Exactly. Out here the women pound their paddy,—that is, rice in the husk,—and the men chop up firewood and even make boats. Then this long open porch is the common roadway for travelers, who climb up the ladder we used, and down the one at that other end."

"I'm glad we have these nice soft mats to sit on, aren't you? And don't Dyaks ever have chairs?" The questions followed one after another in the same breath.

"Yes, to the first, and no to the second," laughed the older man. "If you will look in at the door of Siu's room, you will see how easily his mother can sweep up after a meal," he continued.

Geoffrey looked and saw the refuse being swept down between the pieces of split bamboo that formed the flooring of the rooms and covered hall.

"Wouldn't mother have a fit?" he asked his father, keeping his smile back with difficulty.

Just at that moment Siu beckoned to his guest and the white boy and the brown boy went down the notched tree with the interpreter.

In a few moments they were standing by a great pile of branches heaped up by the roadside.

"It is a 'tugong bura,'" explained the interpreter. "We are very truthful people and we think no disgrace too great for a liar. 'Tugong bura' means a liar's mound. The people who are first deceived start the mound in some place where many travelers pass. It is a warning to all. Everybody who passes must add a branch or twig, no matter how hurried he may be, and he must curse the man who deserved a tugong bura. If he neglects this important duty, he will surely be punished in the next world."

"Doesn't any one ever burn one up?" Geoffrey had visions of splendid bonfires of the huge piles of dry branches.

"Sometimes white people who do not know better burn them, but always another starts in the same place. A liar must expect to be disgraced forever." The interpreter spoke so gravely that both the boys looked pretty serious. Later the American lad said to his father, "I think the Dyaks can teach us a lot, father. We are not nearly as ashamed to tell lies, are we?"

Before the visit was over, Geoffrey learned many other interesting things from the 'enduns' and 'igats,' as the Dyaks call their boys and girls. When Siu was asked the name of his baby brother, he explained that it would hardly be of any use to Geoffrey to be told, as it might be changed the next day, and many other times. One reason for this was, he said, because the Dyaks do not like to hear the name of a dead person, and for that reason change the name of a living person bearing the same name.

"If my baby brother should be taken ill, then my parents would change his name so as to mislead the evil spirits," he had the interpreter tell Geoffrey.

"Please ask the white boy if he would like to hear the story of the mouse-deer and his friends who went fishing," Siu begged.

"Yes, indeed," answered his eager visitor, who loved stories, and fishing too. And that is the story for next time.

Not Giving Up.

Among some skaters was a boy so small and so evidently a beginner that his frequent mishaps awakened the pity of a tender-hearted, if not wise, spectator.

"Sonny, you are getting all bumped up," she said. "I wouldn't stay on the ice and keep falling down so; I'd just come off and watch the others."

The child looked from his adviser to the shining steel on his feet and answered, half indignantly:

"I didn't get some new skates to give up with; I got 'em to learn how with."

Hard tasks are never sent for us "to give up with"; they are always intended to awaken strength, skill and courage in learning how to master them.

Selected.

I am trying to make girls wiser and happier. It is people that count. You want to put yourself into people; they touch other people; these, others still, and so you go on working forever.

Alice Freeman Palmer.



THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

HUDSON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck,—I am nine years old and I go to the Unitarian Sunday school in Hudson. I get *The Beacon* every Sunday. I want to tell you how much I enjoy the poems and stories, especially the continued ones. I think your motto is very nice and I shall try to do it. I should like very much to have a button and will be very careful not to lose it.

Your little friend,

POLLY DAWES.

DORCHESTER, MASS.,
16 Mt. Bowdoin Terrace.

Dear Miss Buck,—I get *The Beacon* every Sunday, and enjoy it very much. I would like to join the Club. I have a friend named Bertha C. Vogel who belongs to the Beacon Club.

I went to a girls' camp last summer. There were nine girls with the name "Elizabeth." We each had a nickname, and mine was "Brickie."

I have enclosed an enigma and hope it will be accepted. I enjoy reading "Grandmother's Spicy Stories" very much. I like to read the letters and get out the enigmas.

Yours sincerely,

ELIZABETH PHILBRICK.
(11 years old.)

Other new members of our Club are Inez and Merton Tiffany, New London, Conn.; Irma and Raymond Perkins, Castine, Me.; Edith Williams, Hackensack, N.J.; Halsei and Ruth Kribstock, Bethel, Vt.

New members in Massachusetts are: Grace M. Butterfield, Ashby; Janet Collier, Ethel Evans, Mary Mitchell, Gwendolyn Smith, Billerica; Elizabeth and Margery Gerould, Cambridge; Priscilla W. Draper, Canton; Eleanor Henderson, Hingham; Isabel Howe, Grace and Margaret Peterson, Lexington; Wallace Deacon and Harriet Folger, Nantucket; Sherman Dane, Reading.

From Our Young Contributors.

HOW THE BEAVERS BUILD THEIR DAMS AND HOUSES.

BY ADELAIDE D. HAWES.

Photographs by the author. Age, 12 years.

BEAVERS are very industrious little animals for their small size. To build a dam they first select a nice forest of poplar trees (preferably). They then start to gnaw through a small tree. When that is done, they peel off the bark and small twigs of the tree and eat them. The little beavers eat their bark in the water and the older ones on the shore. After they strip off the bark they gnaw the bare tree trunk into logs about a yard in length. Then they drag the logs down to the water and sink them, weighting them down with stones. The logs are placed on top of each other, extending across the brook, forming



A TREE CUT BY BEAVERS.

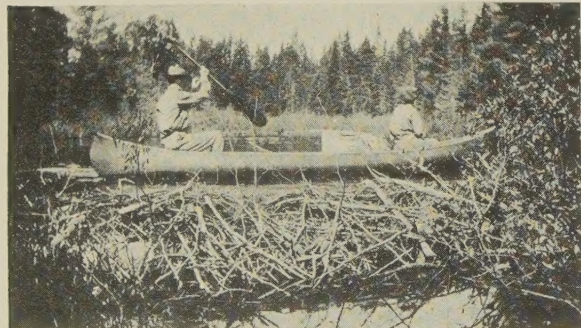
ways of escape for the animals. The sticks are piled on top of each other, forming a point at the top, making what looks like a pile of sticks but what really is the beavers' abode. The sticks are placed so that air can get through them to the beavers.

These houses are divided into several compartments. Food is stored in some of these for the winter.

The work of these little animals is very wonderful and fully worth seeing, but it can only be seen in very still and secluded woods.

These pictures were taken on the banks of a stream in the midst of the wild woods of Maine. This stream is several miles from Mr. Hall's camps which are about seventeen miles from Patten. Dozens of beavers are at work on the dams every night, both on the land and in the water, but it

is extremely difficult to catch them at it.

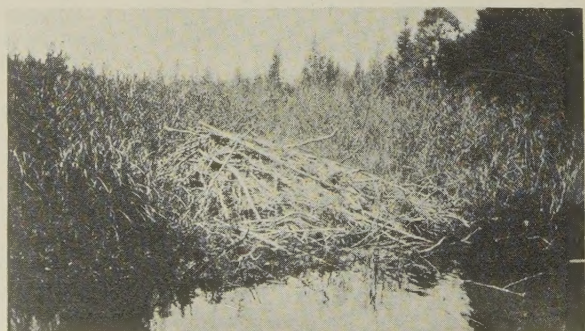


THE DAM.

a wall. This work is kept up night after night by dozens of beavers until the logs reach nearly to the surface of the water; then smaller sticks are used and are matted together by mud patted down by the beavers' flat tails. They continue to add the small sticks until the dam reaches about two feet above the water.

These dams block up the water for nearly a mile, at the end of which another dam is built. Beavers like deep water, and the water is made so by these dams.

The beaver houses are built on the land with tunnels running through them to the water. These houses are made mostly for protection from enemies and cold. The tunnels are the entrances to the house and the



THE HOUSE.

ENIGMA XLIII.

There are dark days enough, and perhaps something more,

For us all, in this rather rough 1, 2, 3, 4;
But we'll do very well if we only can fix
Our thoughts on the sunny days 3, 4, 5, 6.

There is one day that many think brightest of all,
Though in 3, 4, 5, 6 it may now and then fall;
To enjoy it does not require much "6, 7, 8,"
And one need not be wealthy, wise, witty, or great.

For affection and merriment that day combine.

To soften care's harrowing 6, 7, 8, 9;
May they bring you, dear reader, a heart-cheering line
From your own 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Selected.

ENIGMA XLIV.

I am composed of 15 letters.

My 5, 13, 4, is what you hear with.

My 12, 13, 14, 15, is what horses eat.

My 8, 10, 13, is what we have at five o'clock.

My 15, 3, 1, is what dressmakers do.

My 11, 12, 11, is a boy's name.

My 11, 3, is a word and also the second letter of the alphabet.

My 2, 10, is a pronoun.

My 9, 7, 6, is a pig.

My whole is one of Robert Louis Stevenson's poems.

MARY BOND.

TWISTED STATESMEN.

1. Sajme Onerom.
2. Milliaw H. Resdaw.
3. Lained Srewteb.
4. Laumes Asamd.
5. Weils Sacs.
6. Mashot H. Tennob.
7. Caikrtp Renhy.
8. Ahrabam Colnlnl.
9. Mathos Forsejenf.
10. Regoge Gnhnwsoita.
11. Nojh Masad.

CAROL MASON.

A CONUNDRUM.

What beaus, dear lady,
Always you attend,
Your willing slaves,
And at your bidding bend?

YOUTH'S COMPANION.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 18.

ENIGMA XXXIX.—Woodrow Wilson.

ENIGMA XL.—Antoinette Allen Ross.

FOUND ON THE TABLE.—1. Bread. 2. Meat. 3. Soup. 4. Rice. 5. Peas. 6. Beans. 7. Tea. 8. Salt. 9. Toast. 10. Cream.

TWO STATES.—Idaho, Texas.

Answers to puzzles have been sent by Edith Williams, Hackensack, N.J.; Ida Lewis and Wallace Deacon, Nantucket, Mass.; and Eleanor Henderson, Hingham, Mass.

THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR

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